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IN THE APPLICATION

OF

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FOR A

TRAFFIC TICKET BOOK HOLDER

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TRAFFIC TICKET BOOK HOLDER

CROSS-REFERENCE TO RELATED APPLICATION

This application claims the benefit of U.S. Provisional Patent Application Serial No. 60/398,598, filed July 26, 2002.

BACKGROUND OF THE INVENTION

1. FIELD OF THE INVENTION

The present invention relates to a traffic ticket book holder for carrying items on the arm of a user. More specifically, it relates to a device to be worn by a law enforcement officer on the arm for carrying traffic tickets and ticket books.

2. DESCRIPTION OF RELATED ART

Many professionals and athletes require people to write tickets or carry important documentation or equipment as part of their work or performance. Many of these professionals must

also be physically ready to quickly perform a task at a moment's notice. Devices that attach important documentation and equipment to a variety of professionals are also well-known in the related art.

U.S. Patent No. 956,534 issued to Lahey, is a device worn on the wrist or arm of a user and is positioned to retain a memo pad. The device holds the memo pad and is designed particularly for use by waiters, the memo pad being easily secured to a waiter's forearm near the wrist, so as to leave the waiter's hands free, while at the same time holding the memo pad always in a convenient position for writing orders.

U.S. Patent No. 4,415,106 issued to Connell et al., relates to a body supported printed surface in general, and more specifically, to a thin, flexible ski area map holder, which is easily attached to a skier's limb and provides a safe convenient view of an appropriate map.

U.S. Patent No. 4,500,019 issued to Curley, Jr., describes a carrier for portable audio devices that is retained around a user's arm. This device has an armband with two inflatable chambers that fits around the contour of a user's arm. A receptacle is also attached to the armband for holding a portable audio device.

U.S. Patent No. 5,009,347 issued to Phelps, is a wrist holster for carrying a gas canister. The holster is retained by a Velcro strip looped through a buckle and folded back on to itself. The invention, however, does not offer a method of preventing the holster from sliding along the forearm of a user.

U.S. Patent No. 5,170,917 issued to Tourigny, relates to an article to be worn on the arm of a user for displaying a map or other document. The display article is formed from a pair of flexible panels joined along three edges and is selectively sealable and unsealable by the user along a fourth edge. The panels define a pocket for receiving the map or other document to be displayed. One of the panels provides a transparent window through which the map or document may be viewed.

U.S. Patent No. 5,477,633 issued to Leinberger, outlines the use of a document holder during outdoor activities which do not normally leave the hands free to hold a document. The document holder has a plurality of flexible members joined together to form a pouch with a clear or otherwise see-through sheet, such as a mesh material, thereby allowing the document to be viewed.

Although the outlined patents describe various carrier apparatuses attachable to a user's body, none disclose any inventions that pertain to law enforcement officers. In the law

enforcement profession, there is a need for an apparatus to carry such things as booklets of traffic tickets that are easily accessible, but are out of the way when sudden access to items such as weapons, batons, and handcuffs are necessary. Such an apparatus would be very valuable to law enforcement officers and would be in great demand in the marketplace.

None of the above inventions and patents, taken either singly or in combination, is seen to describe the instant invention as claimed.

SUMMARY OF THE INVENTION

The invention is a traffic ticket book holder with a generally rectangular shape, secured to an outer garment and to a user with an upper arm and a shoulder, having a main body with an upper edge, having an inner compartment opening used for carrying ticket books and tickets, a front cover with a top and a bottom portion, that releasably seals the inner compartment opening and an outer pocket on the bottom portion of the front cover to hold miscellaneous items. There is also a protective flap attached to the upper edge of the main body that overlaps the top of the front cover, a shoulder strap to attach the traffic ticket book holder to the outer garment of the user, a

flexible arm strap to secure the traffic ticket book holder to the upper arm of the user and an arm adjustment piece to provide for varying arm sizes.

Accordingly, it is a principal object of the present invention to provide a traffic ticket book holder that frees up the hands of law enforcement personnel wearing the traffic ticket book holder during physical activity.

It is another object of the invention to provide a user wearing a traffic ticket book holder easy access to tickets and a traffic ticket book.

Another object of the invention is to prevent a traffic ticket book holder from sliding down the arm of an officer wearing the traffic ticket book holder.

Still another object of the invention is to provide a traffic ticket book holder with a quick release safety feature.

Yet another object of the present invention is provide a traffic ticket book holder that is lightweight and still able to carry the various tickets and forms that a law enforcement officer might need.

Another object of the present invention is to have a traffic ticket book holder that blends in with a law enforcement officer's uniform and maintains a professional look.

It is an object of the invention to provide improved elements and arrangements thereof in an apparatus for the purposes described which is inexpensive, dependable and fully effective in accomplishing its intended purposes.

These and other objects of the present invention will become readily apparent upon further review of the following specification and drawings.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

Fig. 1 is a front perspective view of a traffic ticket book holder according to the present invention.

Fig. 2 is a side perspective view of a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 3 is a side perspective view of a partially open traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 4 is a front perspective view of a traffic ticket book holder that is in a fully open position.

Fig. 5 is a front perspective view of an isolated shoulder strap used with a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 6 is an environmental perspective side view of a traffic ticket book holder being worn by a user.

Fig. 7 is a front perspective view of a second embodiment of a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 8 is a front perspective view of a third embodiment of a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 9 is a rear perspective view of a fourth embodiment of a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 10 is a front perspective view of a shoulder harness used with a traffic ticket book holder.

Fig. 11 is an environmental side perspective view of the shoulder harness depicted in Fig. 10, used with a traffic ticket book holder.

Similar reference characters denote corresponding features consistently throughout the attached drawings.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF THE PREFERRED EMBODIMENTS

The present invention is directed to a traffic ticket book holder **10** for law enforcement personnel that can be attached to the upper arm of an officer. Fig. **1** discloses a lightweight traffic ticket book holder **10** that is easily accessible yet out of the way when attached to a parking enforcement officer. The currently used traffic ticket book holders are not user friendly as they tend to be bulky, heavy and made of metal. With the

size and weight of the current traffic ticket book holders, law enforcement officers are unable to carry them on their person.

A law enforcement officer carries standard issued equipment mainly on their belt. This equipment usually comprises a flashlight, a baton, a radio and handcuffs. With the belt cluttered with the standard equipment, there is no room to attach a traffic ticket book holder.

As is also depicted in Fig. 1, the traffic ticket book holder **10** has a generally rectangular shape. The main body **21** defines an inner compartment **70** that carries a number of traffic ticket books and tickets (not shown) and a front cover **18** that releasably seals the inner compartment **70**. In this view, a shoulder strap **76** is shown attached to the traffic ticket book holder **10**. A protective flap **14** is attached along an upper edge of the main body **21** to protect against various weather conditions and overlaps the top of the front cover **18**. The front cover **18** has a fixed portion of a clip **15** affixed to it and an outer pocket **24** for miscellaneous items.

A flexible arm strap **13** is provided to secure the traffic ticket book holder **10** to the upper arm of a police officer. One end of the flexible arm strap **13** is attached to the right lateral side **89** of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. The flexible arm strap **13** is attached to the upper arm of the

parking enforcement officer and prevents any unwanted movement of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. The flexible arm strap **13** may be manufactured of stretchable material to provide a snug fit around the upper arm of the police officer or user. One opposing end of the flexible arm strap **13** is attached to an arm adjustment piece **11**. The flexible arm strap **13** further prevents the traffic ticket book holder **10** from dislodging when brushed up against something.

The arm adjustment piece **11** has a surface with a plurality of spaced apart snap buttons **29** to engage with recessed buttons (not shown) on a releasable portion **12** of the snap clip **16**. The arm adjustment piece **11** is readily accessible to the officer to reattach any of the rows of buttons **29** with recessed buttons of the releasable portion **12** of the snap clip **16**. Thus the arm adjustment piece **11** provides for varying arm sizes. The officer or user then can easily adjust the flexible arm strap **13** for comfort without cutting off blood circulation and providing enough tension to secure the traffic ticket book holder **10** to the arm of a user. The arm adjustment piece **11** can be designed as various different mechanisms so long as an adjustment of the flexible arm strap **13** is allowed to conform to the size of the user's arm and retain the traffic ticket book holder **10** in an attached position.

The releasable portion of the clip **12**, when engaged with the fixed portion **15**, together make up the snap clip **16**. The fixed portion **15** is attached to the front cover **18** and the snap clip **16** can be detached when the sides **15a** of the fixed portion **15** are depressed. The snap clip **16** is a pressure sensitive latch that is both easily locked and unlocked to allow for an easy release.

The snap clip **16** can also be provided with a safety release feature that allows the officer or user to quickly remove the traffic ticket book holder **10** from the arm of an officer or user, without depressing the snap clip **16** when necessary. The snap clip **16** can be designed to remain locked until a predetermined load is applied. In an emergency, the officer simply yanks or applies the predetermined load on the traffic ticket book holder **10** and the snap clip **16** disengages, thus allowing the traffic ticket book holder **10** to be removed quickly.

Typically to write out a citation, an officer must specifically recite the exact infraction of the law. These infractions or violations are contained in an offense specific book (not shown). This offense specific book can easily be carried in the front pocket **24** of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. A portion of the front pocket **24** may be made of elastic

material to allow for easier access. Fig. 1 discloses a front pocket **24** on the exterior of the front cover **18**. Additional compartments may also be provided on the front cover **18** and on the main body **21**.

Fig. 2 shows an upper rear fastener **30** located on the rear surface **19** of the main body **21** of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. The upper rear fastener **30** mates with the opposing hook and loop fastener **78** to further secure the traffic ticket book holder **10** to the uniform of the officer. Fig. 2 shows the upper rear fastener **30** mated with the shoulder strap **76**.

The officer releases a protective flap **14** from the front cover **18** via a flap fastener **38** and an upper front cover fastener **42**. As mentioned previously, the protective flap **14** acts as a covering that protects the inner contents of the traffic ticket book holder **10** from inclement weather such as rain and snow. Zipper heads **46** are unzipped and lateral sides **90** of the main body **21** detach from the front cover **18** as shown in Fig. 3.

The front cover **18** has an upper foldable portion **20** that folds at crease **102** for access to the identification pocket **66** and to the citations in the ticket compartment **70**. As shown in Fig. 4, the identification pocket **66** has a window **68**, so that when the offender's identification is placed in the pocket **66**,

the officer may easily copy the information from the identification to the ticket. For further access to the ticket compartment 70, the front cover 18 can be fully opened as depicted in Fig. 4.

The main body 21 is designed to structurally define the ticket compartment 70 to accommodate multiple ticket booklets and retain the shape of the ticket compartment 70. Here a sleeve 110 is provided to maintain the integrity of the ticket compartment 70 and to retain any multiple ticket booklets. The ticket compartment 70 may also have multiple sub compartments or pockets (not shown) to further organize the various types of tickets and multiple ticket booklets, as well as other miscellaneous items.

The front cover 18 further defines the ticket compartment 70. The front cover 18 opens and closes the ticket compartment 70 with zipper heads 46. Two separate zipper heads 46 are used along two separate zipper tracks 50 that cover the right lateral side 89 and the left lateral side 90. The main body 21 is provided with a handle 44, as depicted in Fig. 4. The handle 44 is looped through the zipper ends. The handle 44 allows the drawstring to be looped through the zipper. By pulling on the handle 44 portion of the traffic ticket book holder 10, the traffic ticket book holder 10 can be closed. The handle 44 is

concealed along the area between the upper side **98** and the protective flap **14** when the traffic ticket book holder **10** is in a closed position. The upper side **98** may also be spaced slightly below the upper edges of the right lateral side **89** and the left lateral side **90** and the rear surface **19**. This provides an area to accommodate the handle **44**.

Fig. 5 depicts a shoulder strap **76**, which has a hook and loop type fastener **78** on an exterior surface that faces the rear surface **19** and releasably attaches with the upper fastener **30** located on the upper portion of the rear surface **19**. The shoulder strap **76** also has a shoulder ring **74** to engage with the shoulder flap of the uniform. The shoulder flap of the uniform is looped through ring **74** and is buttoned to the uniform in the usual manner. By clasping the shoulder strap **76** to the shoulder flap of the uniform in this manner, the traffic ticket book holder **10** is prevented from sliding along the arm of the officer. The shoulder strap **76** and the opposing hook and loop fasteners **78** and **30** can be of any size depending on a predetermined load to remove the traffic ticket book holder **10** from the opposing hook and loop fasteners **78** and **30**. The shoulder strap **76** may optionally be left on the uniform when the traffic ticket book holder **10** is not in use or when the uniform is being laundered. The shoulder ring **74** retains the shoulder

strap **76** on the shoulder flap to prevent any sliding along the shoulder flap.

Fig. 6 also discloses the shoulder strap **76** and an armband **82** on the arm of the officer, with the traffic ticket book holder **10** attached in a closed position. The flexible armband **82** is fitted around the arm of the officer and is independent of the traffic ticket book holder **10**.

Nearly all law enforcement paramedic and military uniforms, have shoulder flaps located on the opposing shoulders of their uniform. The officer's police number can be placed here or it can be used to display any recognition or awards. One feature of the traffic ticket book holder **10** is that it attaches to the shoulder flap while still allowing the shoulder flap to be used in the usual manner. By utilizing the shoulder flap, the traffic ticket book holder **10** is secured to an officer's arm, thus freeing up the officer's hands and preventing the traffic ticket book holder **10** from sliding down the arm of the officer.

When the officer desires access to the contents of the traffic ticket book holder **10**, he or she simply unlatches the snap clip **16** and pulls the traffic ticket book holder **10** away from his or her arm. The upper rear fastener **30** and the lower rear fastener **34** then detach from the opposing hook and loop fastener **78**.

As can be seen in Fig. 6, the traffic ticket book holder **10** is fastened to the upper arm of an officer or user. To reattach the traffic ticket book holder **10**, the officer simply attaches the opposing hook and loop fasteners **78** and the arm fastener **86** with the upper rear fastener **30**. Flexible arm straps **13** are then wrapped around the arm of the user, and the releasable snap portion **12** is once again engaged with the fixed portion of the clip **15**. In this manner, a police officer is able to carry citations with easy access, while also freeing the officer's hands for quick action.

It is further appreciated that in cold weather, the traffic ticket book holder **10** can be secured to the exterior of a sweater or coat. The arm adjustment piece **11** can be adjusted to accommodate a sweater or jacket. Also law enforcement sweaters and coats typically have a shoulder flap, so the shoulder strap **76** can still be utilized in securing the traffic ticket book holder **10** to an officer's uniform.

Various materials may be used in the manufacture of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. Any material that is resistant to wear and that can hold up in various weather conditions is preferable. Nylon may be one of many materials used in the manufacture of the traffic ticket book holder **10**.

In another embodiment, as depicted in Fig. 7, the traffic ticket book holder 10 is secured to the arm of a user by a single flexible strap 22. The flexible arm strap 22 is attached to the rear surface 19 and is wrapped around the arm of the officer so as to comfortably secure the traffic ticket book holder 10. The arm strap 22 has a free end 23 that is fed through a buckle 26, which is then tightened and folded back and secured with hook and loop fasteners 25 and 27 located near the free end 23 of the arm strap 22. In this manner, a police officer can release the traffic ticket book holder 10 by pulling on the free end 23 to release the arm strap 22. One skilled in the art will appreciate that the fixed end of the arm strap 22 can also be attached to the front cover 18 instead of the main body 21.

Also in this embodiment, a zipper track 50 runs continuously along the upper side 97, lateral side 89, and the bottom side 98. In this manner, only one zipper head 46 is used to open and gain access to the ticket compartment 70. It will be appreciated that with this design there is no need for the drawstring 54 or its related parts. In this embodiment, a protective flap 14 is pivotally hinged along the upper edge, where the front cover 18 meets the upper side 97, so as to shield the outside pocket 24.

Fig. 8 depicts another preferred embodiment of the traffic ticket book holder 10. The front cover 18 has a loop portion of a hook and loop fastener 25. The arm strap 22 has a hook end of a hook and loop fastener 27 located at the free end of the strap 23 so as to couple with the loop portion of the hook and loop fastener 25. To remove the traffic ticket book holder 10, the free end of the strap end 23 is unlatched from the loop portion of the hook and loop fastener 25 and the traffic ticket book holder 10 is detached. For reattachment, the opposing hook and loop fastener 78 and upper rear end fastener 30 are mated and the arm strap 22 is longitudinally wrapped around the arm of the officer and secured to the front cover 18.

Fig. 9 is a rear view of another embodiment of the traffic ticket book holder 10. This embodiment is different from the previous embodiments in that the arm strap 22 is secured to the rear surface 19 of the traffic ticket book holder 10. Additionally, the first end 28 of the arm strap 22 is partially exposed with a hook and loop fastener 25 to act as a latching tab with the strap fastener 27 of the free end of the strap 23. Once again a lower fastener may be placed below the arm strap 22 on the rear surface 19. In this manner, the arm strap 22 does not wrap around or attach to the front cover 18. The traffic ticket book holder 10 is secured to the user's arm but also

allows access to the contents in the ticket compartment 70, without having to remove the traffic ticket book holder 10 from the officer's or user's arm.

Fig. 10 discloses another embodiment of the shoulder strap 76. In this embodiment, the shoulder strap 76 substantially extends the length and width of the rear surface 19. Likewise, the opposing hook and loop fastener 78 extends substantially over the exposed surface of the opposing hook and loop fastener 78. However, the opposing hook and loop fastener 78 may optionally extend along portions of the surface of the shoulder strap 76. With the upper rear fastener 30 of the traffic ticket book holder 10 substantially extending over the rear surface 19, the traffic ticket book holder 10 will be secured when attached to the shoulder strap 76. Thus the holder strap 71 may optionally be omitted. The shoulder strap 76 may be made of slightly more rigid material to further prevent unwanted movement of the traffic ticket book holder 10. At the upper section of the shoulder strap 73 is a section of soft material to conform to the contour of the shoulder of the officer for additional comfort.

There is also an arm tab 79 that has a tab fastener 75 that releasably mates with the free end fastener 77 of the arm strap 72. The arm strap 72 has an arm fastener 86 rigidly secured

along the edge of the right shoulder **83**. The arm strap **72** wraps around the upper arm of the officer to secure the shoulder strap **76** to the arm. The holder strap **71** wraps around the traffic ticket book holder **10** to prevent dislodging from the attached position. The holder strap **71** is releasably secured to holder tab **81** via holder tab fastener **80** and holder tab fastener **84**.

Fig. **11** discloses another embodiment of the shoulder strap **76** in Fig. **10**, with another embodiment of the traffic ticket book holder **10** in a closed position. The shoulder strap **76** affords the ability of access to the ticket compartment **70** without removing the traffic ticket book holder **10**. To remove the traffic ticket book holder **10**, the holder strap **71** is unlatched from the holder tab fastener **80** and the traffic ticket book holder **10** is pulled away from the shoulder strap **76**.

The traffic ticket book holder **10** has access to the ticket compartment **70** along the upper end of the traffic ticket book holder **10**. The front cover **18** is rigidly secured to and is part of the main body **21**. The upper side **97** is now opened to allow access to the ticket compartment **70** with no zippers being utilized. Instead, the protective flap **14** is the sole mechanism to open and close the ticket compartment **70**.

The traffic ticket book holder **10** can be used by other professionals such as security guards, military personnel and

firefighters. The traffic ticket book holder **10** need not be solely used for tickets. For example, the traffic ticket book holder **10** can be used to carry a two-way radio or a homing device to track the position of an individual. This may be advantageous when entering a building and getting the position of military personnel in a battle zone or maneuvers out in the field.

It can be appreciated to one skilled in the related art that the traffic ticket book holder **10** may be secured to the arm of the police officer in many different ways and have the armbands secured in various places using various methods. Fastening the shoulder flap of a user's uniform may be accomplished using various devices and methods. For example, instead of the shoulder ring **74**, the shoulder strap **76** could have a hole (not shown) to loop the shoulder flap through to attach to the uniform and utilize a releasable buckle (not shown) to secure the traffic ticket book holder **10** instead of hook and loop type fasteners. Also the traffic ticket book holder **10** may have only one zipper head **46** for opening the ticket compartment **70**. The traffic ticket book holder **10** could also be designed in various ways. This and other variations of the invention are within the scope of the present invention.

It is to be understood that the present invention is not limited to the sole embodiments described above, but encompasses any and all embodiments within the scope of the following claims.